"The Drigg Contract," an extent of about three miles and a quarter. The contract for making the extension of the Furness Railway to Broughton has been taken by Messrs. J. B. Fell and Charles Jopling. The operations will be commenced immediately. —— The *Carlisle Journal* states that three hundred men are now employed upon the general station of the united railway companies in that city. The foundation stone was laid by Mr. R. Hemberow, architect for the contractors, on Monday week. —— In one of the shafts of the tunnel at Craigend, says the *Perthshire Courier*, the workmen lately came upon a considerable block of very pure rock salt. —— Messrs. Brassey and Locke have obtained the certificate of the French engineers, approving of the state of the various works on the Havre and Rouen line, and authorizing its opening. They have had an interval of three months for consolidation, whether designedly for that purpose or not is not stated, though the delay is regarded by parties interested as unnecessary and vexatious. The line was to be opened on the 20th instant. The directors, in consideration of the distress of the times, have benevolently resolved to dispense with the ceremony of inauguration, and to distribute the 10,000fr. or 12,000fr. which it would have cost, amongst the more indigent of the communes through which the line has been struck. —— A gigantic project for the connection of the Mediterranean with the Northern Ocean, Antwerp and Genoa the termini, is at present on the tapis. The Sardinian and other Governments have come to an understanding on the subject, more particularly for the connection of Germany with Piedmont, across Switzerland, in the direction of the Lake of Constance. A convention has been signed guaranteeing a minimum of 3½ per cent. interest on a capital of 3,000,000*l.* (75,000,000 fr.) to be raised by a company in London.

THE RAPHAELESQUE STYLE OF DECORATION.*

The Raphaelesque style, as we now term it, was called the grotesque by the Italians of the 16th century, from *grotte*, the word by which they denominated the antique subterranean chambers, which, about that period, were brought to light by clearing them of the *débris* of ruins which had accumulated upon them during a number of ages. On the walls and ceilings of these vaulted chambers and corridors were found the fresco decorations, the study of which revolutionized in so short a time the decorative art, and established that style which we recognise in the works of Raphael and his scholars. * *

These new materials for decoration were obtained chiefly from sculptured architectural ornaments, such as the foliage adorning the friezes of temples, intermixed with human figures, terminating in foliage, armour, military trophies, standards, and helmets, &c. A combination of these materials in decoration was called grotesque, as were also the antique mural decorations before-mentioned. Grotesques were first applied to ornament pictures. It is uncertain what artist first introduced them; Lanzi says that Vasari attributes to Filippino Lippi, who flourished towards the latter end of the 15th century, the credit of having first decorated modern paintings with grotesques copied from the models of antiquity: but as a note in the life of F. Lippi by Vasari intimates, he says merely that he designed them in a better style and executed them with more elegance than the artists before his time. At the end of the 15th century there were many painters who cultivated the art of grotesque decoration with great success. Amongst these the most celebrated was Pinturicchio, a pupil of Pietro Perugino; one of his latest works is the frescoes which he painted for Cardinal Francesco Piccolomini, in the sacristy of the cathedral of Sienna, illustrating scenes from the life of Pius II. In this work, which was finished in 1503-4, he was assisted by Raphael. His earlier works at Rome were done for Innocent VIII. and for Alexander VI., in the Appartamento Borgia, in the Vatican palace. Vasari says, that in the latter work he introduced stuccoes after the manner of the antiques, but the mode of working and compounding the plaster not being then known, they failed, and were in a bad state in his time. In all his decorations he used a great deal of gold. The decoration of the choir of Santa Maria del Popolo, at Rome, is one of his most beautiful works; at the angles of the ceiling are represented the four Evangelists. Benedetto Bonfigli was one of the early masters who painted grotesques; though much older than Pinturicchio, he was his companion in many of his works; he painted with him the grotesques in the apartment of Innocent VIII., but they were not in existence when Lanzi wrote. Pietro Perugino, about the year 1500, painted some beautiful grotesques in the Sala del Cambio, at Perugia. On the gothic vault of this room, in lunettes, are personified the seven planets; the spandrels of the arches are filled in with grotesque decorations, well designed and of great variety; in some compartments they are on a gold ground, and in others on a black ground.

About the beginning of the 16th century was introduced the external decoration of buildings, with architectural perspectives and friezes of grotesques, painted in chiaro scuro. Baldassare Peruzzi was the originator of this style; and he was followed by Polidoro da Caravaggio: both artists decorated the exteriors of many houses in Rome. At this day we see remains of their works in the old part of the city.

Morta da Feltro, a pupil of Pinturicchio, was the first artist who studied the antique mural decoration, which he imitated with great success in his works. At that time the baths of Titus were not excavated, but remains of this style existed in many other localities,—in the baths of Diocletian, and in the Coliseum at Rome; also in other parts of Italy,—at the villa of Adrian, near Tivoli, and at Pozzuolo and Baja, near Naples. He came to Rome when young during the pontificate of Alexander VI., where he studied for some time those particular remains of antiquity. He remained also a long time at the villa of Adrian, and pursued his studies of these subjects even at Pozzuolo and Baja. There are no works of this artist now existing. When in Florence he painted grotesques for Piero Soderini, the gonfalionere of that city, in a room in his palace, but they were soon afterwards destroyed.

Most of these grotesque paintings have been long ago destroyed; none are now in existence except those of the baths of Titus and of the baths of Livia. Serlio gives a most extraordinary account of their destruction, affirming that after they had been copied, they were destroyed by artists from an invidious feeling, but he does not name them, for he says they were artists of celebrity living in his day.

Giovanni da Udine, a pupil of Raphael, was the first artist who brought to perfection the painting of grotesques. At the death of Bramante, in 1514, the architect to the Vatican Palace, during the time of Leo X., the loggie were unfinished; Raphael was then charged by the pope with the superintendence of the building as architect, besides being the designer of the decorations of these loggie. The care of the execution of the grotesques and ornaments he committed to G. da Udine, of whom Vasari speaks in such high praise as the first painter of animals of that day. In Raphael's loggia he introduced into the decoration paintings of various foreign animals which the pope had in his menagerie. Many other artists assisted in this work, the best among whom were Gio. Francesco, Pierino del Vaga, Polidoro da Caravaggio, and others. About this time the subterranean chambers of the baths of Titus were discovered, 'full of grotesques, painted histories, small figures and stucco ornaments in basso-relievo.' The beauty of these works was the admiration of Raphael and his scholar, G. da Udine, the latter of whom devoted himself with enthusiasm to the study of them; he made numberless drawings of the ornaments, and particularly applied himself in attempting to discover the composition of the stucco ornaments, in which, after many experiments, he to a great extent succeeded. Many of the numerous pupils who were employed by Raphael in decorating the Vatican, left Rome upon the death of Leo X., and multiplied their works throughout Italy. In the works of his ablest scholar, Giulio Romano, Raphaelesque decoration had reached the utmost degree of excellence to which it attained; his most excellent works are at the Villa Madama, near Rome, and the Palazzo del T. and the ducal palace at Mantua.

* From "The Polychromatic Ornament of Italy," by Edward Adams, Architect; an interesting work, recently published by Nicholson, Regent-street, and of which we shall speak hereafter.

IMPORTANT TO BUILDING SOCIETIES.

A DOUBT having arisen as to whether societies, acting under the Building Societies' Acts, could legally advance or grant moneys upon the security of property then existing and in the possession of the borrower, it being considered that the Act of Parliament contemplated, with a view to the furtherance of a more complete sanatory condition of the metropolis, the erection or purchase of buildings only, a case has been submitted to Mr. Tidd Pratt for his opinion. The following is a copy of the queries put and opinion given:—

"Question 1.—That under the provisions of the 6th & 7th William IV., the contemplation of building only was considered, the creation or purchase of property being the same. Is it not necessary that a party who becomes entitled to the money appropriated should build or purchase? Or can he assign property in his then immediate possession, as security upon the terms contained in the rules for its repayment, or any other moneys provided for such purpose? And if so, whether any new rules would be necessary to enable the trustees to deal with such a transaction? And whether, presuming that the trustees are incorrect in making such advance, the party taking the same, being a member, could take any advantage of it, so as to defeat the security or liability to pay? Or whether such a transaction would be affected by the usury laws, or any other laws or circumstance whatsoever?"

"Opinion.—It appears to me that, in strictness, under the provisions of the Benefit Builders' Societies Acts, the money borrowed from the society *should be to* erect or purchase property; and, consequently, that a member cannot assign, as security, property which he already possesses. If money is advanced not according to the rules and provisions of the Act, I am of opinion that the member, or any person claiming under him, might set the transaction aside, and in equity, would be entitled to a return of his deeds on payment of principal and legal interest."

CATHEDRAL PORCHES.

THE PORCH AT CANTERBURY.

Liberally as most of our cathedrals have been illustrated by Mr. Britton and others, comparatively little notice has been taken of the very beautiful porches attached to many of them. This is the more to be regretted, as many of them are rich in detail, and so delicate as to repay the most attentive examination. With the view of calling more general attention to them (the more necessary, as some are fast falling to decay), a few of the finest may be mentioned.

The cathedrals of Salisbury, Lincoln, and Ely have each very fine early English porches. At Salisbury, the porch is attached to the north side of the nave, of which it occupies one division, rising as high as the aisles. It consists of a noble plain arched entrance, over which are two double windows, close together, resting on a string; and quite in the point of the gable are two small niches, close together, resting on another string. The interior is groined in two divisions, and its walls ornamented with sunk panelling.

The porch at Lincoln is placed in a singular situation, running westerly from the west side of the north transept. The lower part is a rich piece of groined work, with three entrances, north, south, and west, over which is a small room. The whole of this porch, both exterior and interior, is well worked and richly ornamented.

At Ely, the porch is at the west end of the nave, and is sometimes called the "Galilee." As at Salisbury, the interior is groined in two divisions; each side has a double arcade, the arches trefoil-headed, supported on very slender shafts, projecting about 2 feet from the wall; from this porch a double doorway of singular beauty leads to the nave of the cathedral. Too much cannot be said in praise of this porch. Rickman mentions it as one of

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